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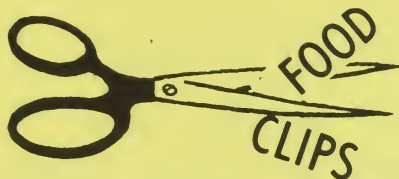
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Food and Home Notes

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How do you keep mashed sweetpotatoes from darkening? Just add a little orange or lemon juice. (About two tablespoons with each quart of mashed sweets.)

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If you plan to freeze celery, you should heat it for three minutes in boiling water. Cool promptly in cold water and drain. (It's best to cut the stalks into one inch lengths.)

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Why are nuts filling? It's their fat content. But they prevent between-meal hunger pangs that encourage nibbling. Most common nuts contain about 10 to 25 percent protein with peanuts highest in protein with about 25 percent. Do not buy moldy nuts -- they may not be safe to eat.

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If you have vacant places in your freezer, you should prepare some combination main dishes for freezing, according to USDA home economists. It is more economical to make your own than to purchase commercially prepared frozen dishes.

FOOD

—and the Energy Crisis

Commonplace habits in preparing food can be costly—not only in terms of wasted money but wasted energy, according to the Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Food preparation usually involves the use of several heat producing appliances and appliances which produce heat require more energy generally, than motor-driven or motion appliances. The wise use of these appliances can save a great deal of energy.

Energy saving tips start with the way you use the—range: start most foods at a higher temperature, then reduce the heat to maintain the desired cooking temperature to conserve energy. —Utensils: use only ones which fit the range burners or surface units. Remember, pans with flat bottoms will absorb more heat. Use tight fitting lids and place the utensil on the range before turning on the heat. Electric range: foods will usually continue to cook 3-5 minutes after the electrical unit is turned off. Oven: plan to use it to capacity—if you're only preparing one item, use a small portable appliance.

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR LAWN —Last Year?

Planning ahead sometimes is the answer to a good lawn. The time to analyze what you did wrong last year may be now—the months before spring planting season begins. Lawn diseases are frequently the problem that homeowners fail to recognize, according to USDA plant genetic researchers.

To have a healthy, vigorously growing lawn, you must select grasses adapted to the soil, climatic, and light conditions under which they will be grown. Then, spend the necessary time, effort, and money on caring for the lawn. In addition to disease control, lawn care includes proper fertilizing, watering, mowing and insect and weed control.

Brown patch is probably one of the most common problems. Fungus responsible for brown patch attacks practically all species of grasses, but it is most serious on bentgrasses, fescues, Kentucky blue grass, rye-grass, centipedegrass, and St. Augustinegrass. Brown patch occurs during warm, wet weather—but disappears when the weather becomes cool or dry. If it is serious, however, it kills the grass. For control you should avoid excessive applications of nitrogen fertilizer. Water lawns early in the day to give grass leaves time to dry out before night. Remove clippings if excessive. It can be controlled if the lawn is watered 48 hours before treatment with a fungicide and if this is repeated three times at weekly intervals.

Other lawn problems include mushrooms and fairy rings. They vary in size, shape and habit of growth and usually develop from buried organic matter such as pieces of logs, or tree stumps. They're usually harmless—but unsightly. You can get rid of them by getting rid of the buried wood—dig it up. If this is not practical, dig a trench, and drench the soil with captan solution.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture revised booklet "Lawn Diseases" (Home and Garden Bulletin No. 61) is available from G.P.O., Washington, D.C. 20402 for 35¢.

THINK SPRING

—A Time for Planting

A beautiful landscape does not just happen. It requires careful planning and maintenance on the part of the homeowner. If you've just moved into a new home and would like to plant and care for the trees yourself, you need to know about the wide variety of trees -- mature height and spread of the tree, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture researchers. Shade trees, ideally, should be sturdy, long-living species. Usually you want them to grow relatively fast and produce the size and shape desired. Proportionately -- small trees usually are best on a small lot with a small house.

Shade trees may be divided into two groups--deciduous and evergreen. Evergreens hold their leaves for one or more years--deciduous trees produce new leaves in the spring.

The primary requirement to consider when you select a shade tree is the cold hardness of the tree. Some species are intolerant of high temperatures--heat and drought resistance usually are linked. Also consider the size and shape of trees at maturity...one 35 feet tall at maturity is acceptable on the average city lot with a one-story house, but a tree 50 to 100 feet high would be too tall.

Trees such as Siberian elm, poplar, red maple and mimosa produce abundant fruits, seeds, and seedlings that can become a nuisance in lawns and gardens. Trees such as Black Locust sprout from the roots -- the kind that often interfere with lawn mowing.

It's difficult to find a species with "no fault." But, if you balance the pros against the cons, you can easily decide on what you'd like to have. Spring is considered the best time to plant in areas where the ground freezes deeply, where strong winds prevail, or where soil moisture is deficient. A new publication is available called "Selecting and Growing Shade Trees," from the Supt. of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Price 30 cents.

AVAILABLE "TO THE PRESS" ONLY

Facts and Figures on Farm Prices--Checking the Market Basket?

"A Half Century of Economic Research," is a new series of articles which chronicles the rise of the Economic Research Service (ERS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. ERS was formed when farm prices dipped near an all-time low following World War II.

An article included in this series is one called "People and Progress," profiles of some of the pioneers of agricultural economics concerning the foreign front and the urban age. Material from these articles will provide excellent background material for many of the current information requests concerning farm prices.

For a single FREE copy of "A Half Century of Economic Research" write to the Farm Index, ERS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 1459 So., Washington, D.C. 20250.

The Tell-Date---Tells What?

Still wondering about "open dating?" If those dates still do not register with your readers, you can send for a copy of the brochure on open dating. The brochure covers questions of "pull date, quality assurance or freshness date, pack date and expiration date." Let your readers know the terms and tell them what the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service has done with this material.

Open dating experiments in test market areas have provided the basic information for this pamphlet. Nearly all major retail food chains have adopted the "open dating" system. Free copies may be obtained by writing to the Farm Index, ERS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 1459 So., Washington, D.C. 20250.

COMMENTS AND INQUIRIES TO:

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